

# THE SPIRE

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 7

JULY 2015



## Identity

As I write, one of the bigger news events has been the 'outing' of Rachel Dolezal, a 37 year old self-designated African American whose parents are both Caucasian. Until she resigned recently, she headed the Spokane chapter of the NAACP which prompted Larry Wilmore, a black late night show comedian, to wonder, in mock surprise, that Spokane had an NAACP chapter. Wilmore also asked why a privileged white woman would want to become black. One of the disturbing aspects of this modern tale is that, it seems, there were for her perks in flipping racial identity. In some cases she became a spokesperson for our national tragedy of slavery, lashing out at white society, saying, white "people who have not felt the lash of centuries of oppression beating down on their backs." Yet she was raised in an affluent home. At Eastern Washington University she taught Africana Studies, and noted in her classroom, on more than one occasion, that she and her children had suffered "at least eight documented hate crimes" when she lived in Idaho. In an interview she stated that "white groups burglarized every home she and her son lived in." More recently Ms. Dolezal reported a home invasion by a "violent hate group". On another occasion she noted that "two white adults broke into my home, and scared my 13 year old son to death." These charges were never substantiated.

Perhaps part of the meaning she found in racial misrepresentation is that she could as-

sume victim status, as well being a spokesperson for minorities who have been and often still are victims of bigotry, and Jim Crow racism. Because of her intellect, among other aptitudes, she was able to rise socially and vocationally. And yet, at least on one occasion, she claimed her Caucasian roots when she sued Howard University, a historic black institution, for discrimination while pursuing graduate studies there in 2001. Her suit alleged that black students were favored over her, a charge which the court dismissed. Thus one wonders whether she operated under false pretense switching racial identity for social status and financial gain. In a recent issue of the New Yorker magazine Jelani Cobb, an African American, and graduate of Howard University, wrote "Dolezal's primary offense lies not in the silly proffering of a false biography but in knowing this ugly history and taking advantage of the reasons that she would, at least among black people, be taken at her word regarding her identity." It appears that Ms. Dolezal employed slavery as means to a personal end.

And yet. As Christians I believe we are called to find goodness in all people. All of us carry mixed motives to one degree or another. In her defense it seems Ms. Dolezal truly believes herself a black soul in a white body— she said something similar on the Today Show interview. Indeed she helps us realize that race far more complex than the issue skin color alone. Just as transgendered indi-

*(Continued on page 2)*

viduals believe their female spirit lodges in a male body, or vice versa, perhaps, too, Ms. Dolezal feels that epidermal color alone does not her racial essence make. I wonder, too, if her racial change has something to do with her parents adopting four black children, her younger brothers. Did she feel left out, a white child in the midst of her darker complected siblings? Or more positively, did she understand that race was a non-issue to her parents, and by extension a non-issue for her budding sense of self? She could become anyone she wanted to be, and it seems she sought identity at an early age with African Americans, and their struggles. In her interview with Matt Lauer on the Today Show, she mentioned that, as a little girl, she colored people with brown crayons instead of peach colored ---a predilection perhaps strengthened when her parents adopted her black siblings.

In his letter to the Philippian church, the apostle Paul wrote his famous 'kenotic' hymn. The Greek word 'kenosis' means emptying or, in Paul's use, 'self-emptying. The apostle writes:

"Have this mind among yourselves, which you have in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God something to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in the likeness of humans. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death on the cross" ( 2:5-11). Paul suggests that becoming like Christ means entering others' lives as deeply as we can, so that their fate and destiny become ours. That's truly the Christian walk, and it means having the core strength to forget ourselves in order to assume the burdens of others and, more to the theological point, to incarnate ourselves in the minds, bodies and hearts of the downtrodden, ill, and broken hearted--those who Jesus loved and served.

Paul suggests that becoming like Christ means entering others' lives as deeply as we can, so that their fate and destiny become ours.

In 1961, as a teen, I read John Howard Griffin's powerful book, "Black Like Me". Griffin, a novelist gifted with profound empathy, a product of his Roman Catholic faith, embarked on an amazing journey, transforming himself from a Caucasian into a black man through the help of a dermatologist who darkened his skin. Before Griffin left the medical office, the physician shook his head and said to him, "Now you go into oblivion." Alone in New Orleans he spied his new face in a mirror, and wrote, "The transformation was total and shocking...I felt the beginnings of a great loneliness." Indeed. He was threatened by thugs, called "boy" and the 'N' word innumerable, run out of restaurants and train stations and threatened with castration and lynching. After his experiment ended, and his racial identity revealed, he was trailed by the Ku Klux Klan and, one night in 1964, he was beaten to a pulp and left for dead.

In the 60's with the rise of Black Power Griffin's efforts were minimized or criticized by newly minted black spokespersons like Stokely Carmichael who stated, "(It is) "absurd for a white man to presume to speak for

black people when they have superlative voices of their own." I wonder what Mr. Carmichael would write about Ms. Dolezal were he alive. I hope he would be tougher on her than Mr. Griffin. Because Howard Griffin, a Christian, understood that transformation involves suffering for the sake of others in order to find truth. His odyssey was not self-serving. In part, it appears to me that Ms. Dolezal's is.

In Christ's Service,

*Doctor Bob*

Doctor Bob

*Summer is here!*

Please come visit the newly planted gardens. Each improvement adds beauty and a bit more privacy to an already special place.

The gardens are for your enjoyment and to honor to those who have chosen this to be their final resting place.

Celebrate and feel God's presence with all those who rest here.

We are all God's family.

*Visit and feel the peace.*

## STICKLEY GARDENS

FOR MORE INFORMATION – CONTACT ANY OF THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

LISA LONGTO (331-1438) CHAIRPERSON

JIM PIRRO (383-0079) TREASURER

ESTHER STICKLEY (331-2919)

SANDIE GREGORY (338-7626)

JIM CRAVEN, CONSISTORY LIAISON

REV STICKLEY, SECRETARY

A SACRED PLACE OF BEAUTY AND CONTEMPLATION.

(LOCATED ON THE SOUTH LAWN OF THE CHURCH)



In May we collected over \$780 to use to purchase food for the kids in the shelters. Linda Cad- dy, Kathy Jansen, Debbie Tucker and Rebecca Mas- ters shopped at Sam's and bought the majority of the food (pictured here- and that doesn't even in- clude all of it!), while the rest was purchased at Shop Rite. While food stamps cover some items, it is often not enough or doesn't include some of the things kids need for snacks for school or camps. The originator of this endeavor, Donna Whitman, is moving to Delaware. However, Patty Tyrol from the Kingston School district is taking over the coor- dination of the program with the help of one of the former shelter residents.



Our June collection was for our own Youth Group's Mission trip to New Mexico. We are so excited for them and will keep them in our prayers.

For the month of July, we will be collecting money for shopping again. This time it will be for the purchase of diapers, baby clothes and other infant supplies for women who seek help from the Pregnancy Support Center of Ulster County.



## Hurley Reformed Church

HURLEY, NEW YORK 12443  
ORGANIZED 1801

THE REVEREND DR. ROBERT L. GRAM, LCSW, PASTOR

CHURCH OFFICE  
845-331-4121

FAX  
845-331-4153

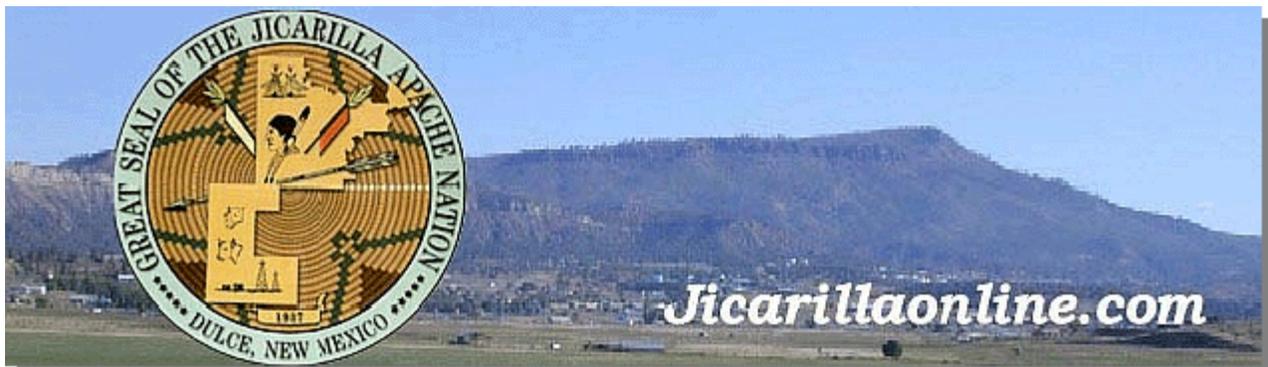
June 2015

Dear Friends,

The Hurley Reformed Church Youth Group is planning a mission trip to the Jicarilla Apache Indian Reservation in Dulce, New Mexico. The youth will be sharing their love of Jesus and the gospel with these children and families by providing a Vacation Bible School and by the sharing of their own Christian experiences while in fellowship. They also will be involved in small maintenance projects, i.e. cleanup from the storms.

They will be housed in the Jicarilla Reformed Church's gym and sleeping in their sleeping bags on the floor, and using the kitchen facilities to prepare their own food plus some to share.

Please pray for their mission of sharing their LOVE with the families at the Jicarilla Reservation. While the young people are expected to contribute, we are collecting to help offset the costs. We don't want cost to keep an HRC teenager from being able to go. Our Mission for the Month of June will be used for this purpose. If you haven't already donated for this mission and would like to help, please send a check to the church marked for the "Youth Mission Trip", or you may donate on-line using "Tilt" which is a program used to raise funds for the trip. Another email will follow with that information. If you have already contributed, we want to thank you for your support. You will receive a report when the group returns home.



## Summer Birthdays

### July

Jordan Nekos	3
Bonnie Dumas	3
Rachel Cline	4
Bill Beesmer	4
Kenneth Odell	5
Teagan Helsley	6
Debbie Tucker	6
Nicholas Rockwell	13
Alyssa Kurtz	14
Roger Vogt	14
Bryan Hill	15
Barbara Mayfield	16
Lori Decker	16
Jay Marrus	19
Sandra Emrich	19
Win Morrison	20
Pat Manley	24
Dan Stott	24
Katherine Emrich	25
Midge Stott	27
Matthew Horvers	28
Caitlin Cox	28



### August

Roberta Falatyn	1
Jim Pirro	2
Reid Jordan	3
Donna Harder	10
Florence Kurtz	10
Frank Pinkney	12
Rev. Charles Stickle	13

Kathleen Jansen	15
Aubrey Horvers	16
Roslie Gilpatric	19
David Emrich	20
Alison Cline	22
Jennifer Checksfield Mann	22
Charles Emrich	23
Mia Sullivan	24
Barbara Kindt	28
Gary Longto	28
Helen Richter	30
Dick Baker	31

## ANNIVERSARIES

Barbara & Dick Baker	6/7
Drew & Su Wonderley	6/12
Eric & Jo Sullivan	6/12
Wally & Linda Cook	6/14
Tom & Judy Horvers	6/16
Barbara & Bob Kindt	6/17
Bobbi & Don Checksfield	6/21
Frieda & Doug Constant	6/23
Terry & John Gaffken	6/26
Steve & Phyllis Bliss	6/27
Christie & Jim Prentice	6/28
Steve & Valerie Nekos	6/29
Todd & Katrina Rubino	6/30

Joyce & Frank Pinkney	7/6
Roger & Mary Lou Vogt	7/11
Gerard & Delores Wyncoop	7/22
Rebecca & Allan Masters	7/27

Bryan & Leigh Hill	8/1
Barry & Marcy Rell	8/2
David & Gretchen Giles	8/6
Hal & Kathy Hauck	8/6
Annmarie & Fred Kurtz	8/15
Kathy & Ted Musialkiewicz	8/16
Leeanne & Frank Warren	8/16
Jim & Roslie Gilpatric	8/19
Jeffrey & Alyson Rafferty	8/24
David & Sandra Emrich	8/29
Cindy & Dino Sumerano	8/30



## CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES

Jordan Cline, son of Diana Cline, graduating from Kingston High School.

Sarah Longto, daughter of Gary and Lisa Longto, graduating from SUNY Oneonta

Erin Ruth, granddaughter of Shirley Ruth and niece of Kathy Jansen, graduating from SUNY Oneonta

Heather Williams, granddaughter of Bob and Janette Williams, graduating from Western Connecticut State University

Douglas Woodard, grandson of Natalie Woodard, graduating from SUNY Canton

# News Bytes

Information you should know ; Opportunities for Fellowship.



**The Stone Pony**  
**CHICKEN BBQ**

**Tuesday 9-15-15**  
**4:00 pm - 7:00 pm**  
at Hurley Reformed Church

**Eat-in or Take-out**

Dinner choices:  
**1/2 Chicken -or- Pulled Pork**  
includes: Potato Salad, Baked Beans  
Fresh Roll w/Butter, Homemade Brownie  
**\$12.00 per dinner**

Bring in **ONE NON-PERISHABLE FOOD ITEM**  
to be donated to Caring Hands Soup Kitchen  
and receive **\$1.00 OFF one dinner!**

all meats are fresh & local from  **Please order by 9-9-15**  
call **Sandy at 687-4006** 



## WOMEN'S Bible Study

The Women's Ministries Bible study group will meet for the first time on Tuesday, July 21, at 1 PM in the Dutch Room. Our initial study will be focused on the life of a woman in the Bible and how her story still speaks to us today. For further information, call Nancy Sweeney at 336-5267 or e-mail her at [sweeney.n11@gmail.com](mailto:sweeney.n11@gmail.com)



## men's group

Looking for good fellowship?!

The Men's Group meets the third Wednesday of the month. Next meeting is July 16 at 7 pm.

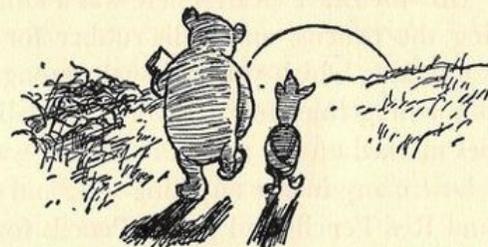
Come hang with us.

See Wally Cook for details.

"When you wake up in the morning, Pooh," said Piglet at last, "what's the first thing you say to yourself?"

"What's for breakfast?" said Pooh. "What do you say, Piglet?"

"I say, I wonder what's going to happen exciting today?" said Piglet.



Pooh nodded thoughtfully.  
"It's the same thing," he said.

## STONE HOUSE DAY



Stone House Day 2015 is coming up on July 11. For those of you who have newly joined our Church, Stone House Day is our main fundraiser, and is a wonderful opportunity to participate and meet new people. We will need lots of help: docents in all the houses, help in the cafeteria, kitchen and dining room, Granny's Garret in the basement, parking lot and lots of other things. We will need all of you to make this a successful and wonderful day.

We will have about 6 old stone houses open this year. They are open from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm and the docents work 3 hour shifts.

We will also have Children's Colonial Crafts on the Parsonage Porch, where we make corn husk dolls, tinsmith candleholders, and we dip candles. Along with that we will make small potpourri bags. This year we are hoping to demonstrate how to make herb and cornhusk wreaths. If you enjoy working with children and their families, this would be a perfect opportunity for you to help.

Spinners, weavers and a blacksmith will demonstrate their skills on the Parsonage grounds. We are also hoping to have a woodworker and quilters. If you know of anyone who has a skill that would be appropriate to demonstrate as a colonial art, please let us know. Maybe it is YOU!!

Along with this we have a colonial militia encampment with men and women in colonial outfits who show some of the items they needed to bring with them when they were called out to fight. Their women might demonstrate how to cook over an open fire, and the soldiers will march and show their weapons.

Granny's Garret, a jewelry sale, and church commemoratives will occupy the lower level of Schadewald Hall, along with the Women's Guild Bake Sale. A quilt, made by the Hurley Quilters, will be raffled off at 4:00 pm. This is the 21st quilt they have made. Be sure to buy tickets before it's too late. The kitchen will be busy preparing lots of food and snacks for lunch and those "in between" moments. Sojourner Truth will present her famous speech in the Sanctuary. Organ recitals will feature period music, and our violinist will perform on the Bevier Porch. There might also be a few more plays or one-man (woman) performances (we're still working on that). There is a small bus (actually two) that will take people out to the houses on the outskirts of town.

Please let us know if you will be available and what you would prefer to do. We also need help selling raffle tickets, prepping food the Friday before, putting up signs and, of course, cleaning up at the end of the day. Lots of things to do to keep small and big hands busy. Don't forget that children can be involved in a lot of these activities. And, of course, bake for the Bake Sale.

Ellen Richards, Chairperson

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Information you should know ; Opportunities for Fellowship.



## Prayer Chain

The Women of the Prayer Chain find that their work is never done. We thank God for the victories and praise Him for the successes yet to come. As you may know, your requests when given to us are on our lists for 6 months. We appreciate the updates that we receive. Thank you for your continued faith in us. We continue to pray your strength in the LORD! Our next meeting is the first Sunday in September.

Deb Zuill



**I would like to thank** our friends in the congregation for the prayers and compassion during my ordeal with surgery. I am still recovering and I am comforted by your kindness.

Annemarie and Fred Kurtz

"Life is a journey to be experienced, not a problem to be solved."



-Winnie the Pooh



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## Tech Help Needed!

The church's Technology Committee is looking for someone in the church who would be willing to help setup a new website. We are currently looking for a new platform to work with. Any help sure would be appreciated.

Is there a Webmaster out there somewhere?

Marilyn More, Technology Chairperson

Forward 3, Hurley Reformed Church

Jul 2015 (Eastern Time)

July 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28	29	30	1	2	3	4
			6pm - Cub Scout 6pm - Den 1 Bears @ 6:30pm - Girl Scout 7pm - Boy Scouts 7pm - Kingston Area 7:45pm - Bagpiper	1:30pm - Hurley 7:30pm - 1st Capitol		
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
10am - Worship @ 11am - Prayer Chain 11:30am - Stone	3pm - Quilting @ 5pm - Dog Training 7pm - Little League 7:30pm - Al-Anon @	4pm - Hurley Purters 4:30pm - PC 101 @ 7pm - Boy Scouts	Stone house day setup @ Schadewald Hall 6pm - Cub Scout 6pm - Den 1 Bears @ 7:45pm - Bagpiper		7pm - Motorcycle	Stone House Day 10am - Genealogy @
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
10am - Worship @ 3pm - daisy girl	11am - VFW @ 3pm - Quilting @ 5pm - Dog Training 7pm - Consistory @ 7pm - Hudson Valley 7:30pm - Al-Anon @	4pm - Hurley Purters 7pm - Boy Scouts	5:30pm - Dog 6pm - Cub Scout 6pm - Den 1 Bears @ 7pm - Hurley Lions 7pm - Men's group 7:45pm - Bagpiper	7pm - NE		1pm - jim Pirro
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
10am - Worship @	10am - Genealogy @ 3pm - Quilting @ 5pm - Dog Training 7:30pm - Al-Anon @	4pm - Hurley Purters 7pm - Boy Scouts	5:30pm - Dog 6pm - Cub Scout 6pm - Den 1 Bears @ 7:45pm - Bagpiper		10am - woodstock	
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
10am - Worship @ 3pm - daisy girl	10:30am - Genealog 3pm - Quilting @ 5pm - Dog Training 6pm - Hudson Valley 7:30pm - Al-Anon @	4pm - Hurley Purters 7pm - Boy Scouts	6pm - Cub Scout 6pm - Den 1 Bears @ 7:45pm - Bagpiper	4:45pm - Dog		

PO Box 328  
11 Main Street  
Hurley NY 12443

Phone: 845-331-4121  
Fax: 845-331-4153

E-mail: [admin@HurleyReformedChurch.org](mailto:admin@HurleyReformedChurch.org)

The Rev. Dr. Robert L. Gram, LCSW  
Pastor

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Pastor

The Rev. Dr. Robert L. Gram, LCSW

Hurley New York 12443

HURLEY REFORMED CHURCH

JULY 2015

THE SPIRE

